

textbook loan program for private and parochial schools, then what you should do is go back and change that legislation that was passed as far back as 1973 and has continued on the statute books. That is the appropriate tack to take. I think it's inappropriate to take the approach that we will have a statute on the books, on the statute books of the State of Nebraska that we will not implement because we will not fund it. I think that's entirely inappropriate and incorrect in this instance. Therefore, my vote is going to be to vote for the funding, to implement the textbook loan program that has been a part of the Nebraska statutes for many years and has been affirmed as a constitutional legislation by this body in the recent court case. If, in fact, you don't agree with the textbook loan program, then next year come in with a bill to change that statute. I don't think it's appropriate to take away the funding for it and, therefore, I would ask you to vote in support of the override on this particular issue. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Withem, please, followed by Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President, members of the body, first of all, I think we can learn something even up here through the last day, and I was personally very surprised to hear Senator Abboud say he wasn't going to vote for any veto overrides and I'm sure most of the rest of you were too, shocked to hear that from Senator Abboud. Seriously, on the measure, I support the textbook loan program. Unlike some of the other people that are supporting this, I am not a parent of a child who attends private school, I've never attended a private school myself, probably will never have any direct contact, either myself or my family with private schools. And I consistently stand here on the floor of the Legislature proposing legislation that I think will improve the public schools. But a portion of our state's responsibility I think is to...the prime responsibility of our state government in terms of education is to assure that all of our young people, all of the children of our state get a decent education. Those private schools that are out there, somehow the folks that are in public education view the private schools as competitors. Now if those private institutions did not exist, the burden that would be there on the public school system would be phenomenal. It would be impossible for us to meet in all probability. The private schools perform an outstanding function for our state. I think if we the state, through...I would never be in favor of direct support, I would